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# OUT ON THE POO PATROL

**Council launches a covert lookout for dog-mess after mother chucks up a protest**

**A NORTH Oxfordshire council is sending out officers on undercover missions to catch pet owners who fail to pick up the mess left by their dogs.**

Cherwell District Council officers will target dog owners during the early morning and evening walks in areas deemed as hotspots.

Anyone who does not clear up after their animal will be issued with a £50 fixed penalty notice.

The move comes just weeks after mum-of-three Alyson Clifton highlighted dog fouling problems near her home.

She started circling dog mess in bright-coloured chalk and leaving messages for dog owners after having to side-step 17 separate pieces of poo on the school run.

Since the start of April the council said its staff had already issued two £50 fines.

Cherwell's environmental enforcement manager, Mark Harmon, said: "The majority of dog owners in Cherwell religiously pick up after their pets."

"But there are those who will try to get away with it if they think nobody is watching."

"Our message is that we will be watching and patrolling at all hours of the day – not just

**By Rachel Bayne**

from 9am – 5pm.

"While some of our patrols will involve high-visibility clothing to make ourselves noticeable, other officers will be much more discreet in a bid to catch offenders in the act."

"Our advice is to always pick up after your pooch, as you never know just who is watching – or when."

Previously, officers have posed as dog walkers to catch people in the act.

Early morning patrols have been carried out in People's Park in Banbury from 6am.

And the council is planning to step up their campaign with additional patrols this summer.

Residents who are caught flouting the law could be fined £50 or have the matter escalated to magistrates' court where the penalty could be increased to £1,000.

There are more than 120 dog waste bins in Banbury and in 2013-14, costing the town council around £21,000 to empty them.

Dog bins in the town are emptied twice a week and cost approximately £200 each to buy and install.

To report incidents view cherwell.gov.uk/dogfouling or call 01295 227007.



**ABOVE:** Fed-up mother Alyson Clifton circles some dog mess with a piece of chalk near her home

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## InBRIEF

### Mother and baby escape kitchen fire

■ A MOTHER and her baby escaped unharmful from a kitchen fire in Bloxham after a smoke alarm went off. She was upstairs with her child when the fire broke out on Wednesday, April 16. She fled the house in Courington Lane, leaving her baby with a neighbour, before returning to put out the fire with a bucket of water. A plastic tray had accidentally been left on a hot cooker in the kitchen. Firefighters from Banbury and Deddington arrived and the mother was treated for smoke inhalation.

### Election deadline

■ PEOPLE interested in standing for election on to Cherwell District Council have just hours left to submit their nominations. Candidate nominations close at 4pm on today, with voting taking place on May 22. One third of Cherwell's seats – 17 across the district – are up for election. The European elections also take place on the same day. Local residents have until May 6 to ensure they are registered to vote. For information view [cherwell.gov.uk](http://cherwell.gov.uk) or call 01295 227001.

### Waste bin raiders

■ BURGLARS raided a flat in Chipping Norton and used a recycling bin to carry away the property. A laptop, bank cards, clothing and an iron were stolen in the Finsbury Place break-in between Thursday and Friday, April 10 and 11.

Charity runner Claire Squires, who died during the 2012 London Marathon



## Tragic runner's charity total

ABOUT £1.15m has been raised by the Claire Squires Fund in memory of the runner who died after collapsing one mile from the finishing line of the London Marathon two years ago.

Ms Squires, 30, a hairdresser, was raising money for the Banbury and District Samaritans, a charity with which her mother was involved. A total of 81,135 donations

have raised £944,176 for Ms Squires' JustGiving website page over the past two years, plus an additional £202,550 in donations through Gift Aid.

Some of the funds will go to the Banbury and District Samaritans, which will help run the organisation for more than a decade.

An inquest that was held in early 2013 found that her death

was likely to have been caused because Ms Squires took a legally available performance-enhancing drug.

The appeal total was revealed after Robert Berry, 42, collapsed and died after completing the 2012 London Marathon.

Mr Berry was raising money for the National Osteoporosis Society.

■ Working with councils to fill in the gaps on the Internet map

# Group in a battle to get better rural broadband



Cotswold Broadband Group's Hugo Pickering

By Dan Robinson

Remaining residents either have to wait for further council funding or take matters into their own hands.

Hugo Pickering founded the Cotswold Broadband Group in 2011 to help rural communities get a better service.

The group – a profitable company owned by residents – finds gaps in a map produced by the county council showing where it will provide coverage and works with parish councils to find a solution.

Mr Pickering said: "In hamlets and villages their speed can be between 0.5mbps to 2mbps but it's just not acceptable to customers."

He believes one of the problems in securing funding is that it takes time for residents to

sign up to superfast broadband because they are tied to other contracts with providers.

Mr Pickering said: "The need is there but it's just about meeting that need."

"Seventy per cent want superfast broadband, that shows the demand is there."

"But if they are in a contract with an Internet provider they can't just step out of it so people shouldn't be surprised that take-up rates don't suddenly leap up. It takes a while for it to filter through."

The county council's business

chief, Nick Carter, said filling the gap left by the broadband programme would depend on getting extra funding from Government grants.

And district councils would decide this summer how much money they would allocate of their own cash.

He said: "Oxfordshire is one of the most rural counties in the South East. That's part of its charm and why people like to live and work in Oxfordshire. But on the other hand it does present a few challenges as a result."

BRITAIN boasts the widest coverage of superfast broadband of the five leading European economies, including France, Germany, Spain and Italy, but in Oxfordshire it is a different story.

Latest Ofcom figures for 2013 show 73 per cent of UK homes and businesses can get superfast speed of at least 24 megabits per second (mbps) through fibre-optic cables.

In Oxfordshire the figure is 69.5 per cent and some villages and hamlets can't get broadband through underground cables or have speeds of less than 2mbps.

Oxfordshire County Council's £25m "Better Broadband" scheme, working with BT, wants 90 per cent of county premises to have access to superfast broadband by 2015.



Stepping down, Stephen Richards

## NHS spending chief makes way

THE Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group – which is responsible for deciding where most NHS spending in Oxfordshire goes – has appointed a new chief executive after the position's previous holder stepped down because of the demands of the job.

David Smith will take over as the head of the OCCG in June, coming from Kingston Clinical Commissioning Group in London, where he is currently accountable officer.

He replaces Stephen Richards, who stepped down at the end of last year to be replaced by interim chief executive Ian Wilson.

Dr Joe McManners, clinical chairman of OCCG, said: "We are delighted that David Smith has

accepted this post with OCCG.

"His track record in leading health and social care services and his considerable financial background mean that he will bring a wealth of valuable skills and experience to Oxfordshire."

"I look forward to working with him to transform our health and social care system into one of the best in the country."

Mr Smith has worked in the NHS since 1975 and in his current post in Kingston he leads the commissioning of health authority adult social care as well as health services.

Since being established in April last year, the OCCG has faced financial difficulties with a forecast £6.1m deficit this year and £6.9m next year.

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■ District councillors 'stunned into silence' after traffic forecast is revealed

# Gridlock fear as the HS2 rail line is being built

CHERWELL District Council is to demand the Government alters its plans for building the highspeed railway service HS2 because of fears construction traffic will snarl up Banbury and its surrounding roads.

The council has opposed building the link, which will initially run between London and Birmingham and cuts across a corner of Oxfordshire at Finmere and Mixbury, but is also now worried about the impact of traffic during its building stage.

The council has £14,000 unspent in its war chest over the scheme and has now voted to spend that on petitioning the Government to change its construction plans and routes.

Leader Barry Wood said councillors had been stunned into silence as they were given a rundown on the expected impact on traffic at the M40 junction and Hennef Way due to construction traffic using the A423 Southam Road, A361 Daventry Road and B4525 through Middleton Cheney.

The latter would see 1,240 additional lorries on it per day for two years, meaning Banbury would face "gridlock for years", he added.

By Rachel Bayne

Mr Wood said: "HS2 runs through part of the Cherwell district. There is going to be a really big impact and congestion in Banbury."

The motion to petition the Government was backed by the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Independent councillors but opposed by Labour.

Mr Wood said: "I am shocked and dismayed that Banbury Labour Party are letting the town and its people down so badly on this."

But opposition leader Sean Woodcock said: "The Labour group on Cherwell District Council has consistently opposed the council spending taxpayers' money on opposing HS2. This includes petitioning the hybrid bill. Labour agrees with the assessment of officers that this infrastructure project will have an impact on Cherwell. But the value in petitioning is unclear as this impact is not yet known, and the council, with other local authorities, will be consulted in the future anyway."



Protest signs that have been appearing in and around North Oxfordshire



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It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

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that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service the Oxford, Banbury & Abingdon areas and Trevor is finding that his approach is a major factor

in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show

how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

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## InBRIEF

### Police launch a crime roadshow

**POLICE** will hold rural crime prevention roadshows this week. Officers were handing out crime-cutting tips at the Turney Group in Middleton Stoney on Wednesday, and plan to continue their campaign at FN Piles and Sons Farm Supplies in Warmington today, and at Deddington Farmers' Market on Saturday.

### Views sought

**PEOPLE** are being encouraged to have their say on Oxfordshire County Council's plans to change its drug and alcohol treatment service. The council is trying to create a single service that combines advice and information, medical treatment, recovery programmes and support with housing, education, employment and social activities. The council said it would be county-wide and open to all adults seeking help for substance misuse at any level. Anyone wanting to give feedback can visit [oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://oxfordshire.gov.uk) before the consultation closes on May 5 this year.

### Plea to bakers

**FORCES** charity Help for Heroes is urging bakers to sign up for the annual Colossal Cake Sale. The campaign will see hundreds of cake sales held up until May 5 across the UK, but Oxfordshire is lagging behind. Last year there were 24 sales in the county, but fewer than half of that number have signed up so far. The campaign hopes to raise thousands of pounds for wounded soldiers and their families for more information visit [helpforheroes.org.uk/colossal-cake-sale](http://helpforheroes.org.uk/colossal-cake-sale)

## ■ Union role for a Banbury teacher

# Speaking up for teaching profession

**A TEACHER, who has been elected as president of a national union, says he has to give breakfast to pupils in his school.**

Oxfordshire's Geoff Branner, 59, took over the role in the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) last week.

He teaches pupils with special educational needs at Banbury Academy but said many of his children arrived at school without having been fed.

Mr Branner, who is taking a sabbatical for the year he is president, said: "Poverty is growing in schools.

"The number of children we give free breakfasts to in Banbury has risen considerably in the last four years.

"They are coming to school too tired to concentrate because they could not sleep as their bedroom is so cold and they haven't been fed."

It was a topic he spoke of for his maiden speech at the union's conference in Brighton last week.

Mr Branner, who became a teacher in 1977, has worked in special needs education all his career and has previously worked at Carterton Community College and Lord Williams's School, in Thame.

Mr Branner said his proudest moment was helping to turn around the fortunes of a boy who had suffered from neglect at one of the

By Dan Robinson

Oxfordshire schools. He said: "He spent most of his primary school days under a table kicking out at anyone who came near him.

"But in the years he was with me and a fantastic teaching assistant, we provided him the means to keep himself clean, with a complete change of clothes, and taught him to read and write.

"We turned him from someone who was completely unemployable to a young man who was able to hold down a job and is still in a job more than ten years later.

"He didn't get five A\* to C GCSEs but he got skills that made him a contributing member to society with the dignity of having a job."

Mr Branner now wants to see state school teachers recognised for their hard work in closing the gap with private schools.

He said: "Oxfordshire schools get £3,000 to £4,000 per year for each child they teach, whereas if you go into a private school they probably get that much per term.

"So what teachers achieve on a shoestring budget is an astonishing achievement.

"You really can't compare what's possible to achieve between those incomes."

Mr Branner believes he was elected to the role because his "passion for education" was clear.

He added: "I want to ensure that our schools provide for kids and help them to become the authors of their own life story.

"It's really important that children are given the right tools to equip them for adulthood.

"Although where I differ from Michael Gove is that where he thinks everyone needs the same set of tools, I think each child needs their own set of tools for their own purposes."



Geoff Branner

## Geoff Branner's views:

### ● STRIKES

"We didn't join the National Union of Teachers because we felt the Government had began to engage in talks and we thought it would be incorrect to take industrial action.

"At the moment there are no plans for strike action but that doesn't mean we won't if the Government makes a move which we feel would be damaging to future education."

### ● FREE SCHOOLS

"By and large they are a vanity project for Michael Gove. It seems to me that the primary and secondary schools in Oxfordshire tend to fill the requirements of educating kids.

"The pre-school system has already thrown up some pretty appalling practices in different parts of the country and I don't think we want to introduce them in Oxfordshire. There should be democratic control over schools."

### ● ACADEMIES

"I think they can do a good job but I'm not convinced they are needed. You can make improvements in the provision of education in any school – it doesn't require it to be an academy. Having a management structure with directors on large wages removes some of the cash that should be going to working with children in the classroom."

### ● PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES

"If you don't allow local authorities to build schools and wait for the private sector to step in, then they are going to step in when they have a steady source of income guaranteed.

"There needs to be more planning at Government level. We know when a child is born that four years later they are going to go to school, so we know when the primary school places are needed."

### ● TEACHERS' SALARIES

"Teachers recognise they are in a financially challenging time. We've had two rises of one per cent in the past four years. While we recognise that costs are going up and therefore it's harder for us to manage, we know that many parents are in an even greater difficulty so we bear those problems.

"But teachers will start looking for better-paid jobs elsewhere if we're not careful and we will lose some good and talented people."

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## Buses firm announces fare rises



A Stagecoach bus with wi-fi and leather seats

**STAGECOACH** bus fares are set to increase across Oxfordshire later this month.

Fares will rise an average of 2.5 per cent, but some Banbury tickets will remain the same under the changes, due to take effect from this Sunday.

The company said the fare rises were lower than the 3.6 per cent increase in bus operator costs across England.

Stagecoach Oxfordshire managing director Martin Sutton said: "We know fare changes are frustrating for our

passengers.

"However, we have done our best to keep fare changes to a minimum and many customers will see no increase at all.

"We have worked hard to control costs and keep fares down for those who rely on the bus the most.

"As the cost of motoring remains high, our bus services continue to offer a greener, smarter and better value way to travel and we are committed to re-investing income from fares in new buses and further improvements to services for passengers."



# 'I regret this is necessary in 21st century Britain'

# Clergy call for action

# over food poverty

**CHURCH leaders, led by the Bishop of Oxford, have called for urgent action on food hunger.**

The Right Reverend John Pritchard handed over a letter, signed by 47 bishops and more than 500 members of the clergy, to the Prime Minister in the wake of figures showing that more than 4,000 people used the Trussell Trust



Janet Ray, project manager at the Bicester Food Bank

By Rachel Bayne

food banks in Banbury and Bicester over the past year – a rise of more than 50 per cent.

Bishop John said: "Food poverty and hunger is a huge problem and is much more serious than people realise."

It is hoped the letter, organised by the End Hunger Fast campaign, will raise awareness of food poverty.

Bishop John said: "I am pleased to support the End Hunger Fast campaign, though, of course, I regret that it is necessary in 21st-century Britain."

The letter states: "These shocking figures are well under the total number of people going hungry. They range from those too ashamed to visit their local food bank, to families not yet in crisis, but ever more worried about keeping their cupboards full. One in four in financial trouble are cutting their food portion sizes and half are cutting their food budgets."

"Lent has finally seen the beginning of a real national discussion on what this hunger means, what causes it, and how we as a society can begin rising to the challenge of this national crisis."

The Trussell Trust, which runs food banks in Bicester and Banbury, said it had seen the

number of people using their service increase by 50 per cent over the last two years.

More than 4,000 people received parcels from the food banks last year, compared to 2,879.

Janet Ray, project manager at the Bicester Food Bank, in Victoria Road, said: "There was a huge increase the year before last. We would hope that people didn't need the food bank, but obviously we are there for them."

Elsewhere, the Oxford Food Bank, which was set up in volunteers in 2009, has also reported a huge rise in the number of food deliveries

Organiser David Cairns said: "We started four-and-a-half years ago with five charities and now serve over 55. At the Oxford Food Bank we deliberately don't get involved with politics."

The food bank in Lamarsh Road is open every day and delivers around £1m worth of food every year.

Nationally, The Trussell Trust, reported a 163 per cent increase in food bank use over the past year.

Across the UK, 913,138 people in crisis were provided with three days' emergency food between April 1 2013 and March 31 this year.

David Cameron's office said he was unavailable to comment.



Bishop of Oxford, the Right Rev John Pritchard



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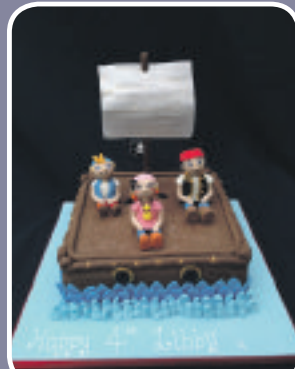
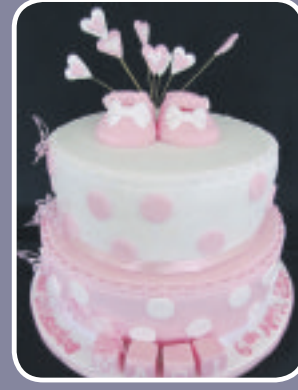
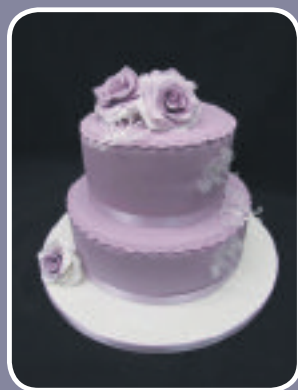
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Warning of challenges to come as county population grows

# 90 per cent of parents get school of choice

**NEARLY 90 per cent of Oxfordshire children due to start school in September have been allocated a place at their first choice.**

But the figure is down more than a percentage point, 89.09 from 90.66, and Oxfordshire's education chief has warned of challenges to come.

Figures just released reveal an additional 361 applications this year



Zoe Patrick

By Pete Hughes

– 7,545 compared with 7,184 last year. And the number of five-year-olds in the county, currently at 7,976, is projected to peak at 9,017 in 2019 according to the Office for National Statistics.

Oxfordshire county council's education boss, Melinda Tilley, said: "Like many other areas we are expecting the school age-population to continue to rise in the coming years.

"In circumstances where demand for places at particular schools exceeds their capacity, the reality is that not everyone can be offered a place.

"That means while most Oxfordshire families will be receiving the news they were hoping for, there will also be some who will be disappointed."

Education expert Dr Mary Boustead said England was facing a "growing crisis" in primary school places, with tens of thousands of

children missing out on their first choice.

And in Oxfordshire, where 100,000 new homes are due to be built by 2031, many towns are already feeling the squeeze.

County councillor Zoe Patrick said: "We need new school places sooner rather than later.

"Last year, some parents in my division got a place for one child in the village and had to send a sibling two-and-a-half miles away.

"It is possible to appeal against the decision, but it is a tortuous process."

Since 2009 Oxfordshire County Council has created about 1,000 new reception places across the county.

It is currently expanding 20 primaries, nine due to be completed in September this year and 11 the following September.

Any family who has not received a first-choice offer has the option to appeal, and remain on continued interest lists for their preferred school, in case spaces become available before September.



Education chief Melinda Tilley

## InBRIEF

### Opposition to wind turbine

■ A PLAN for a wind turbine in a field in Mollington should be refused, a council planning officer has advised. Murex Energy has applied to Cherwell District Council for a turbine with a maximum blade-tip height of 77 metres. Some 353 residents and organisations like English Heritage and The National Trust objected with concerns including its visual impact and "flicker effect". Council planning officer Phil Smith said it should be refused because of considerable harm to nearby parkland at Farnborough Hall and a nearby obelisk.

### Heady heady

■ LIBRARIES across Oxfordshire are on the hunt for young volunteers to help set up this year's summer reading challenge. Staff are urging volunteers, aged 13 to 24, to sign up for this year's Mythical Maze project to help children choose books. County councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale said: "As well as being a fun and enjoyable experience, volunteering for the summer reading scheme provides young people with the opportunity to develop their communication and interpersonal skills and gain valuable evidence for their CVs."

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# Survey reveals just how nature is coping

By Pete Hughes

■ 8,000 take part in the Big Garden Watch

**HALF of Oxfordshire residents have seen a muntjac deer in their garden, but only two per cent think they have ever had a visit from a red squirrel.**

These are the results from the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch survey, which reveals Oxfordshire to be a snapshot of the national wildlife picture.

Grey squirrels were the most common species surveyed, with 72 per cent saying they had spotted one in the garden every month. Some 20

per cent said they regularly saw a muntjac deer in their garden too.

And a fifth of those asked said they had seen a roe deer in their garden.

RSPB Oxford group volunteer Lyn Ebbs said she quite often saw muntjac deer in her own garden, which was a sign of a predator/prey "imbalance".

She said: "I would like to see more big predators like wolves and bears but I don't think it would go down too well in Oxfordshire.

"We don't have the diversity of

wildlife that we had 50 years ago. There is roughly three times more land in gardens in the UK than in nature reserves.

"We have taken out quite a few big predators at the top of the pyramid but also quite a few things at the bottom, like insects, through intensive farming practices.

"That means birds and other wildlife turn to our gardens to find food."

But Mrs Ebbs said she doubted whether anyone in Oxfordshire had actually seen red squirrels, despite the survey showing 0.4 per cent said they saw one on a monthly basis.

She said: "I don't think there are any in the county. "At the time of year the Big Garden Birdwatch was held, grey squirrels are a little bit gingery. So I think there is an awful lot of

wishful thinking."

In Oxfordshire, 7,808 residents kept watch in their garden for an hour over the weekend of January 25/26 to count birds and other wildlife.

More than 13 per cent of respondents in Oxfordshire did not know whether they had ever seen a common toad, but nearly 50 per cent saw a frog once a month.

It was the first time in the bird survey's 36 years that participants were asked to record other wildlife visiting their gardens.

The survey found local bird populations had held steady over five years, and, in terms of other wildlife, the RSPB said Oxfordshire had nothing to worry about.

County spokesman Fen Gerry said: "Oxfordshire is following a national trend and I don't think that's a bad thing.

"There isn't a massive lack of anything here. It's a happy medium.

"We're certainly not alarmed by anything revealed in the survey."



**ABOVE:**  
A grey squirrel



**LEFT: A**  
badger

**BELOW:**  
A red squirrel



Lyn and Richard Ebbs keep an eye on a muntjac deer, right



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# Secrets of healthy cooking Benefits all round as mother sets out a fresh challenge



The Giggins family – Neil, Isaac, Oliver and Anneliese – dig in to fresh food

OX66698

IT'S the dilemma for the busy modern family – you want to put the healthiest food on the table but time often means choosing pre-prepared meals.

Anneliese Giggins decided she wanted to set herself a challenge: make meals from scratch for a month for her family of four. And that meant right down to churning her own butter, baking her own bread and even skinning 100 tomatoes in one sitting.

The mother-of-two, from Kensington Close, Kings Sutton, needed a new culinary challenge after suffering with post-natal depression following the birth of her second child, Oliver, in October 2012.

The 31-year-old said: "Before I had Oliver I did lots of food from scratch with my first child, Isaac, now three.

"After Oliver I had post-natal depression and was on anti-depressants for eight months.

"It was hard enough to cook anything. I was too low to think about preparing food."

Her month-long cooking experiment

By Rachel Bayne

pushed her to the limit and was far from cheap – but she said the changes she and her family had undergone had been priceless.

Mrs Giggins, who is a full-time

mother, said: "The first week was exhausting. Our weekly shop cost £160, double the usual bill.

"The next three weeks were a lot easier. It has been more than worth it. My skin has become clearer and my energy levels lifted towards the end of the month."

The change from ready meals and frozen food to healthy homemade meals produced an equally dramatic change in her young son, Isaac.

She said: "Isaac was a bit boisterous but during the 30 days there was a noticeable change, he was much calmer and the tantrums disappeared."

The whole family has bought into the change in lifestyle, her web-developer husband Neil, 37, has changed his hours at work so he returns to the family home earlier in the day. Even Oliver, 17 months, has stopped throwing his food on the floor.

The challenge has brought the Giggins family closer together.

Mrs Giggins said: "We made eating more of an event.

"Breakfast and lunch used to be eaten in the living room. Now we eat every single meal at the table."

Two weeks on from completing her 30-day challenge, the cost of the family's food shop has returned to normal and they have kept up their new lifestyle.

She added: "Even though I have completed the 30 days, I am still making a lot of our food from scratch. It has become second nature to me.

"When we all sit down around our kitchen table tucking into our dinner, I love knowing that I have made my family a good quality meal full of fresh, healthy ingredients."

## Anneliese's top tips every mum should know

### Plan your meals:

Write a weekly menu planner so that you know what you will be making each day for the entire week. Not only did a weekly menu plan help to keep my brain focused but it also stopped me wasting food.

### Double up and freeze:

When making something from scratch, be it potato wedges or chopped tomatoes, make double if possible so that you can put half into the freezer for another day. That way you will have meals to hand when you're in a rush – and you'll only have to clean up once

### Homemade bread:

When you make your own bread you can carry out the first prove overnight in the fridge so your bread can

be super fresh the next day. My favourite part of the cooking day was making fresh bread.

### Love your leftovers:

*I used to throw stale bread out for the birds but I now use it to make breadcrumbs. You can use a blender, food processor or grate by hand if you have the muscle! Breadcrumbs are perfect for giving a crispy coating to fish fingers and chicken nuggets.*

### Keep it simple:

There's no need to smother our food in rich, expensive sauces. Keep things simple and let the flavour of the vegetables or meat shine through. The kids will soon get used to the new flavours.



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## InBRIEF

### Sainsbury's in Easter recycling

RESIDENTS can recycle leftover Easter packaging for the first time at Sainsbury's in Kidlington. The Oxford Road shop is recycling plastic, card and foil to stop Easter egg boxes being sent to landfill. The recycling point is in front of the store until April 30. Store manager Kevin Morton said: "Customers were really supportive of our Christmas card recycling service earlier this year and we hope they make this a cracking success too."

### Attacks revealed

THERE were more than 100 sex attacks in the Thames Valley's hospitals and health centres in the last three years. Freedom of Information Act figures show there were eight rapes between January 2011 and December last year, and 93 other sex crimes. Data for Oxfordshire alone was not available.

### Care home cost

OXFORDSHIRE County Council has approved its new care home fees for this financial year. The council has a legal duty to provide residential accommodation for those who need care, because of age, illness or disability and, as of January this year, has funded places for more than 1,600 older people. Its fees are now £458 a week for residential care – up by £6.

# Adventurer tells of avalanche horror

## Former mayor escapes death on Everest

FORMER Chipping Norton mayor Jan Meek has texted her husband to reassure him she was not caught up in the avalanche on Mount Everest that killed 13 Sherpa guides.

Mrs Meek, 69, had just completed an 18-day trip to Mount Everest base camp – part of her preparation for a planned trek to the South Pole in December 2015 – when the disaster happened on Good Friday morning.

Her husband, Peter Walker, said he had received two text messages and a short phone call from her to say she was all right.

He said the scene of the avalanche was about a three-hour hike up the mountain from base camp and his wife could have been caught up if she had been part of a team heading to the top.

By Dan Robinson

He said: "It was really rather emotional as so many of the guides that had taken her group up were from the same villages or related to them."

Mrs Meek also told her husband she had seen the emergency helicopters come and take the victims' bodies away. She wrote: "Very sobering. It could have been us, we left base camp as it started to snow."

Mrs Meek served on Chipping Norton Town Council in the 1980s and 1990s and was also the chairman of the town's chamber of commerce.

The trip to Everest was preparation for a trek to the South Pole in December 2015.

As part of her training, she now

hopes to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in September, after narrowly failing to reach the summit two years ago.

She said: "Altitude training is key to any South Pole success, so this is our start. Our next hurdle is Kilimanjaro, part of my own unfinished business."

In 1997, she rowed across the Atlantic in 101 days with her son, Dan Byles, now North Warwickshire's MP.

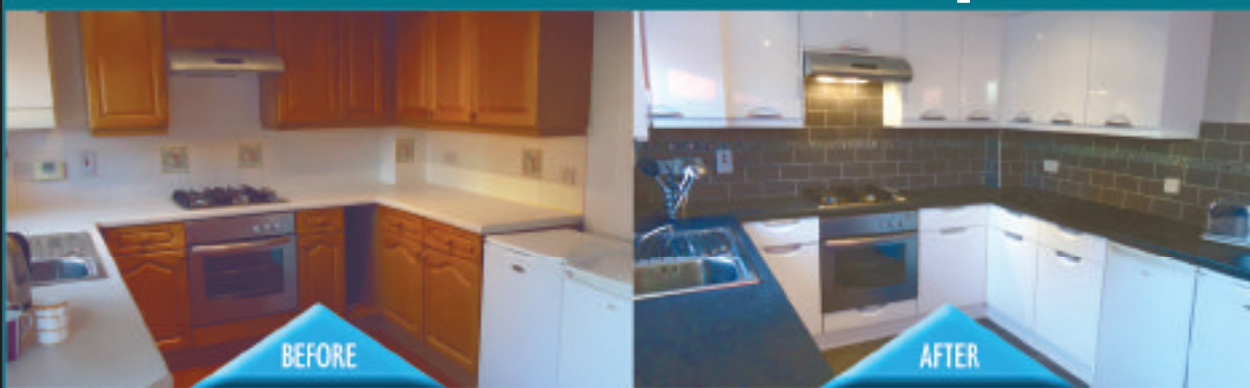
She became the world's oldest person to row any ocean, then 53, in the first Atlantic rowing race and holds three Guinness World Records for the first mother and son to row an ocean, the first mother and son to walk or ski to either pole and the oldest woman to walk or ski to the magnetic North Pole.

She now tours the country giving motivational speeches.



Jan Meek pictured on an expedition to the North Pole in 2008

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■ Rising costs are put down to better diagnosis and greater awareness

# County tots up £8m bill to beat the blues

By Oliver Evans

**OVER the last five years, prescriptions of anti-depressants have soared in Oxfordshire, costing the NHS £8m.**

In 2006/07 some 220,282 prescriptions for the two main categories of anti-depressants – selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and serotonin-adrenaline reuptake inhibitors – were made, rising to 355,004 in 2012/13.

The most common drugs prescribed were citalopram, 166,144 times last year, and fluoxetine, also sold as Prozac, with 75,682 prescriptions.

Health leaders said that a recent focus on spotting depression, greater awareness that help was available and people remaining on medication for longer, led to the rise.

Oxfordshire Mind chief executive Patrick Taylor said: "Although a lot of stigma sadly still exists around mental health problems, more discussion on the subject in the media and campaigns, such as the national *Time to Talk Day*, have helped more people to understand. As more and more sufferers feel confident to seek the support they need, it is perhaps not surprising if we see an increase in prescriptions for anti-depressants and other medications."

He said county residents were "fortunate" to have access to TalkingSpace, an NHS programme that uses cognitive behavioural therapy. This helps people change their way of

Oxfordshire Mind chief executive Patrick Taylor

thinking and behaviour patterns to combat moderate depression and anxiety. The service sees about 7,500 people a year.

The figures were provided by the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group – which makes most NHS funding decisions – after a Freedom of Information Act request.

A spokesman said: "There has been more focus on diagnosing early depression over the last five years.

"Appropriately prescribed anti-depressants are very effective and guidelines are clear about the advantages of staying on anti-depressants until the episode is fully resolved."

Previously, some patients were advised to stop taking drugs if they felt better, he said.

June Dent, a consultant clinical psychologist who runs TalkingSpace, said: "In a time of recession, more people feel stressed. If they have had a history of depression that might tip the balance.

"By and large, one in six of us will feel depressed or anxious at some time in our lives. That figure doesn't really change very much."

For information on TalkingSpace, visit [talkingspaceoxfordshire.org](http://talkingspaceoxfordshire.org) or call 01865 325777.

## Just one per cent jobless

THE number of people signing on the dole in the county has fallen to just one per cent of the working population for the first time in more than five years.

Latest figures from the Office for National Statistics show 4,361 claimed Jobseeker's Allowance in March, a fall of

266 on the previous month.

It represents the lowest total since July 2008 with 2,729 fewer people claiming the benefit than at the same time last year.

Nationally, the claimant count fell by 30,400 in March to 1.14m.

## InBRIEF

### 'Pound day' plea

■ VOLUNTEERS from Katharine House Hospice are urging offices to support the charity's "Bring a Pound to Work Day". Funds raised from the event on Friday, May 9, will go to support work at the Adderbury Hospice. Offices can take part by bringing in £1 to work, and organising a dress down day or cake sales. In 2013, the same event raised more than £3,000. To register your office, ring 01295 812161.

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■ 2,162 criminals walk away with a warning

# Sir Tony calls for action over police cautions

**MORE than 500 police cautions were handed out last year to criminals who had already been given formal warnings.**

Thames Valley Police cautioned 2,162 Oxfordshire people in 2013 – 515 of whom had already been cautioned before including two criminals warned five times previously.

The figures, obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, have raised questions over the effectiveness of the

By Ben Wilkinson

warnings, but the force has defended its use of them.

Banbury MP Sir Tony Baldry told police and criminal justice minister Daimian Green in Parliament in December that cautions should not be handed out for serious crimes.

Now he believes Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner Anthony

Stansfeld should look at how cautions are given out.

He said: "Within the criminal justice system there may well be many good reasons for issuing a caution rather than bringing a prosecution.

"However, I think the only difficulty with cautions is that by definition they are not subject to judicial oversight.

"There is no effective mechanism for detailing what cautions, as a whole, are being applied appropriately.

"There is no perfect way to monitor this but I think it is probably a matter the Police and Crime Commissioner should look into."

A caution is a formal police warning that is given to a person who has admitted a crime and it will always stay on their record. Those who refuse the caution will usually face prosecution.

Superintendent Rory Freeman, head of Criminal Justice at Thames Valley Police, said cautions were used in proportion to the crime committed. He added victims' wishes were also considered. He also said a caution should not be given to someone cautioned or convicted of similar crimes within two years.

But he said: "Cautions act



Thames Valley Crime Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld

as a strong deterrent for most of those that receive them. The majority of those given a caution do not reoffend.

"For those that do, cautions provide a record of their offending that can be used to highlight a pattern of behaviour should that individual be arrested for a similar offence again or face prosecution before the courts.

"Thames Valley Police has consistently followed the Ministry of Justice guidance on simple cautions which have very recently been put on statutory footing by the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill."

Last year, the *Banbury Cake* reported that rapists, robbers, arsonists and sex offenders were among those given 15,466 cautions between April 2006 and April 2012.

## HOW POLICE CAUTIONS ARE DESIGNED TO WORK

● **CAUTIONS** are a way of dealing with offenders without going to court and are meant to be given for 'minor' crimes.

● The perpetrator has to admit the offence and agree to be cautioned. If they do not agree, they can be arrested and charged.

● Cautions are issued at the discretion of the police or Crown Prosecution Service.

● They are not a criminal conviction, but they can be used as evidence of bad character if the person appears before court in the future.

● The Government says cautions are given "for minor crimes – for example, writing graffiti on a bus shelter".

● Cautions will appear on a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

## InCOURT

### Verdicts from magistrates courts around the county

■ **LIAM TAYLOR**, 19, of Hill Close, Chipping Norton, admitted criminal damage to a radiator and pipe work to value of £255.20 in Hill Close, Chipping Norton, on February 3. Community order made and told to do 40 hours of unpaid community work in the next 12 months. Told to pay £255 compensation, a £60 victims' surcharge, and £40 costs.

■ **AAMIR ARFI**, 20, of Middleton Road, Banbury, admitted possession of Class-B drug cannabis in Banbury police station, Warwick Road, Banbury, on March 12. Fined £75, a £20 victims' surcharge and £20 costs.

■ **AHMED HASSAN-SULE**, 20, of Glyndebourne Gardens, Banbury convicted of sexual assault on a female aged 16 or over in Broughton Road, Banbury, on November 15. Fined £140, £150 compensation, a £20 victims' surcharge, and £340 costs.

■ **LEE BURTON**, 43, of School View, Banbury, admitted failing to provide information as to the identity of a driver alleged to have been guilty of an offence in Banbury on August 16. Fined £200 and told to pay a £20 victims' surcharge and £65 costs. Given six points on driving licence.

■ **DANIEL HANWELL**, 20, of Marlborough Place, Banbury, admitted stealing £23 worth of clothes from Primark, Oxford, on April 4. Also admitted stealing £46.96 worth of DVDs from WH Smiths in Cornmarket Street, Oxford, and an Xbox controller worth £29.99 from Game in the Westgate Centre on the same date. Given a 12-month conditional discharge and ordered to pay a £15 victims' surcharge and £25 costs.



Sir Tony Baldry

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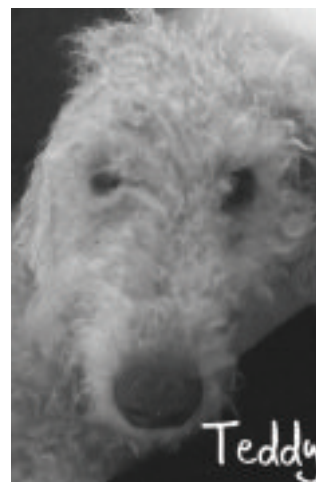
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## Gearing up to mark milestone of 40th year

**JOHN Terry chuckles: "This is the first proper job I've ever had in my life!" He doesn't mean he's been unemployed for the rest of the time – far from it.**

After studying English and drama at university, he worked for several years as a freelance director at the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond, Finborough Theatre and the National Theatre, among others, as well as running his own company, Shapeshifter.

Then, in 2008, he arrived in Chipping Norton to become only the third director in the theatre's 40-year history.

"I was used to having contracts of a few months maximum and then off to find the next thing," he says. "So this was the first time I settled down somewhere and had a job that paid a sensible wage and where I knew what I was

going to be doing for the next few months.

"I've always worked in the theatre and always worked as a director, but this is the first time I've run a building."

Unlike many in the theatrical profession, John's enthusiasm for the theatre kicked in comparatively late.

"I suppose I hit it at about 16. I started off acting in school plays, but even before I left school I'd started directing. I directed my first show when I was in sixth form, and started to think 'I rather like this!'

"As an actor, I was far too analytical; I couldn't be emotionally in the moment. So, apart from enjoying being in charge, I found my skills were better suited to sitting back and guiding the process from the outside. I'm far happier looking at the stage than being on it!"

After his somewhat nomadic existence in London – where he would do a single show and then move on, without ever getting to know his audience – John is finding the continuity of Chipping Norton a welcome change.

"When I came for the interviews, there was a production here by Wood Green School, and just the feel of the auditorium, the space, the way the audience connects with the show, really appealed to me," he recalls. "It was a chance for an

extended dialogue with a group of people.

"With each show and each new season you're continuing the conversation about what people are interested in, what they're challenged by, what they're excited by, and so that process of being able to have a longer-term project, rather than a single production, really appealed to me.

"And this theatre is rooted in its community. There's a very strong sense of ownership, and people are incredibly enthusiastic and supportive of it."

Chipping Norton's theatre may only be small – it seats just 200 – but it has big ideas.

Like his predecessors, John is determined to bring in major names, and to put on shows of the highest possible quality.

"I think all three of us have been quite stubborn in our insistence on

they play, but they come because they love it. They get a great response from the audience and they get well looked after."

John's proudest achievement since coming to Chipping Norton has been producing more work in-house – he hopes to expand further.

"I think if you're wanting to be a truly creative place, you have to be creating work yourself. Otherwise you're just the hosts for other people's work. So I'm very proud that we've built the organisation to a level that we can now take on the financial risk of making shows ourselves."

With the 40th anniversary upon him, John's job has just got even busier.

The programme of celebratory events includes an exhibition of material from the theatre's archives, a 1970s-themed birthday party and a marathon attempt to write, rehearse and put on a pantomime in the space of 48 hours.

"The pantomime is so much at the heart of what people know this place for," he says.

"We've stars and cast and creatives from previous pantos coming back, and we'll start on the Thursday evening and work all the hours God sends to create a fundraising show for the weekend. It's an idea I'm ruling on an almost daily basis at the moment."

As for the future, John hopes to get the theatre recognised nationally as a creator of work, and to tour in-house productions more extensively. Meanwhile, he is determined to ensure that there is something for everyone at the theatre, and that everyone who goes there has a great night out.

"I think variety is important because we are the only cultural venue in this area.

"Also, I think part of the experience of coming to Chipping Norton is coming to this cute little Victorian theatre, so I want the work that happens on stage to be entirely surprising and not cute and pretty, but striking and really good quality. If we get that right, then I think the balance is perfect."

■ For details of The Theatre's 40th anniversary season, visit [chippingnortontheatre.com](http://chippingnortontheatre.com)



John Terry, the director of The Theatre, Chipping Norton

### Nicola Lisle talks to the director of The Theatre, Chipping Norton, about its anniversary

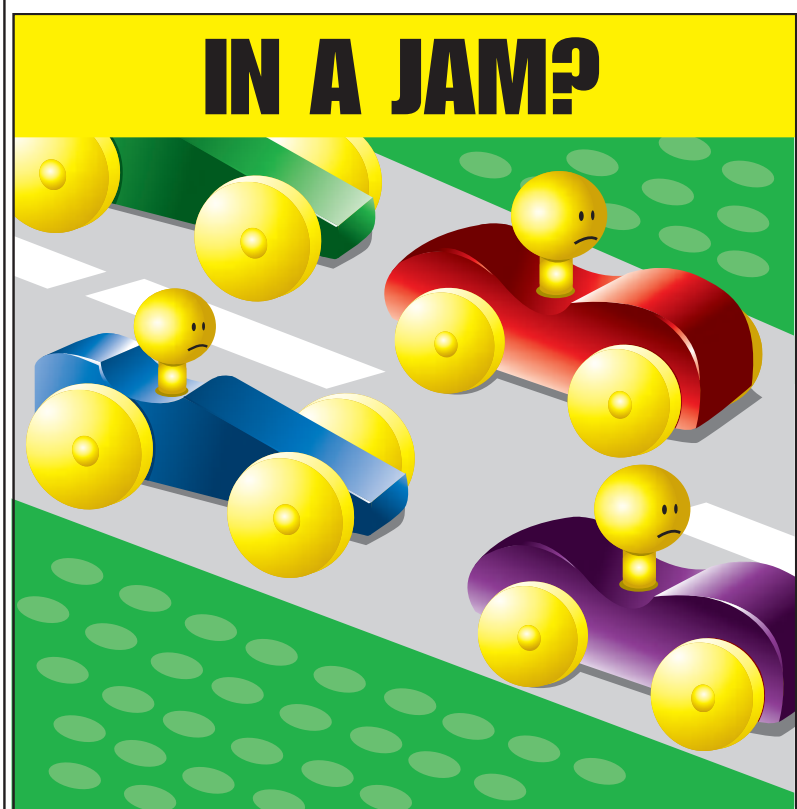
punching above our weight," he says. "We do get big names here, and we take on quite big projects ourselves, whether it's the pantomime or our in-house shows. We're finding that people are travelling a greater distance to come here now.

"Our catchment area is now 30-40 miles, and for me that's exciting, because there's a real sense of it being unique, of it being something special."

The theatre's size does present some practical problems. The stage is surprisingly spacious, but there is no loading bay so everything has to come in through the auditorium, with huge articulated trucks having to reverse into the narrow road outside the theatre.

"We've had the most extraordinary things come through. Half a Mini came through there for one show, and there's huge set pieces that come through and massive lighting rigs. There does have to be a bit of creative thinking, and occasionally we have to get out the saw!

"For a lot of artists we are by a long way the smallest venue that



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# Payback of empowered women misses the mark

**THE OTHER WOMAN** (12A, 109 mins) Comedy/Romance. Cameron Diaz, Leslie Mann, Kate Upton, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Nicki Minaj, Don Johnson. Director: Nick Cassavetes.

Revenge is a dish best served ice-cold and in generous portions in Nick Cassavetes's romantic comedy of spiteful sisterly solidarity.

For the first hour, it's a tasty dish laced with tart one-liners by screenwriter Melissa Stack, who deftly sketches the emotional bonds between a wife and the two other women, who have unknowingly slept with her skirt-chasing husband.

These early scenes, in which the embittered spouse surfs a tidal wave of rage while the two mistresses wrestle with their guilt, achieve a pleasing blend of painful home truths and ribald humour.

"You had sex with my husband 50 times?!" shrieks the wife when she learns about the impressively gymnastic nature of her husband's relationship with one of his bits on the side.

"Don't you have a job? Or hobbies?!" she caterwauls.

Once the feisty femmes agree on a plan of attack to make the cheating husband pay for his bed-hopping sins, any subtlety in the script is supplanted by crude toilet humour and cutesy fairy-tale romances for two of the protagonists.

Thus, one mistress drops laxatives into the husband's drinks and we're

treated to a protracted sequence in a cramped toilet cubicle with the philanderer as he endures a blitzkrieg of deafening rectal explosions that seem to go on forever.

He deserves his comeuppance, we just don't need to see or hear it, blow for literal blow.

Carly Whitten (Cameron Diaz) is a high-flying attorney with a sassy personal assistant (Nicki Minaj), who aptly describes her boss as "a ruthless law-robot".

However, Carly wants to be adored and she falls for a handsome charmer called Mark (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau), who showers her with gifts.

On the spur of the moment, Carly surprises Mark in a sexy outfit and she stumbles on his secret: he's married with a wife, Kate (Leslie Mann), who gave up her job for her man.

Unexpectedly, the two women become friends.

Shared sisterly sympathy solidifies when Carly and Kate discover that Mark has been cheating on both of them with another woman, Amber (Kate Upton).

Emboldened by their experiences, Carly, Kate and Amber resolve to teach Mark a lesson he will never forget.

Meanwhile, Carly flutters her eyelashes at Kate's hunky brother, Phil (Taylor Kinney).

"You aren't having my husband and my brother," Kate warns her.

The *Other Woman* fails to deliver in a messy and unsatisfying final act that skids wildly out of control and



A scene from *The Other Woman*, with Cameron Diaz and Nikolaj Coster-Waldau

Picture: PA Photo/Fox UK Film

muddies the underlying message of female empowerment.

Diaz and Mann spark appealing screen chemistry and Coster-Waldau possesses the right amount of charm and slipperiness to convince us that he could deceive so many women, and almost get away with it.

Upton is surplus to requirements, but does provide a predictable final punch line for Carly's ageing, five-times divorced father (Don Johnson).

## CakeWhat's on

### Music

**SATURDAY: Lampit Arms, Tadmarton:** Pete McCray with soul and reggae. Free admission. 9pm. 01295 780070.

### Theatre

**The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park, Banbury:**

Apr 24, *The Fitzrovia Radio Hour*. 7.30pm. £14, concession £12.

Apr 25, Arthur Smith At Your Service. Expect an evening crammed with jokes, anecdotes, short stories, songs and readings. 8pm. £16.

Apr 26, The Mods Band. Cancelled.

Apr 26, Spanish Night. Flamenco guitar maestro Ramon Ruiz and dancer Anita la Maltesa are joined by Attab Haddad and percussionist Antonio Romero (from legendary Spanish group "Radio Tarifa") and singer Javier Marcias. £12. 7.30pm. Box office: 01295 279002.

**The Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton:**

Apr 24, launch of the Chipping

Norton Literary Festival, with Lauren Child, author of *Charlie and Lola*. 5pm. £5.

Apr 26, Chipping Norton Literary Festival presents Alan Johnson – *This Boy*. £12. 10am. *Sold out*.

Apr 26, Chipping Norton Literary Festival presents Jonathan Aitken – *Power and Personality*. 12.30pm. £12.

Apr 26, Chipping Norton Literary Festival presents Kate Adie – *Fighting on the Home Front*. £12. 2pm.

Apr 26, Chipping Norton Literary Festival presents Crime Writing – *Fact or Fiction?* With Tania Carver, author of *The Doll's House* and *Chocked*, Prof Dave Barclay, a world-renowned forensics expert, and Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset Nick Gargan. £12. 3.30pm.

Apr 26, Chipping Norton Literary Festival presents Tim Harford – *The Undercover Economist Strikes Back*. 5pm. £12.

Apr 26, *Austen-tious – An Improvised Novel*. One of the most talked-about shows on the UK comedy scene. 7.45pm. £14, concession £12. Part of Chip Lit Fest.

Apr 27, Nicci French, *One Writer, Two Minds*. 10am. Part of Chipping Norton Literary Festival.

Married couple Nicci Gerrard and Sean French reveal an unusual marriage. £12.

Apr 27, Joanna Trollope and Emma Bridgewater – *Balancing act*. 3pm. £12. Part of Chip Lit Fest.

Apr 29, A Film Lover's Festival. Several short, upbeat and funny films. 7.30pm. £12.

Apr 30, War Correspondents. Real-life testimony, singing and choreography fuse together. While reporting the outbreak of war, a journalist is held at gunpoint, caught in the no-man's land between two nations. Interviews with war journalists tell the extraordinary stories and life changing experiences of men and women who risk their lives in extreme circumstances – the pain, the courage and the strength of friendship. 315, concession £13, school £8.50. 7.45pm. Box office: 01608 642350.

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## Banbury reels to a first-minute blow

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Hitchin Tn	42	15	10	17	61	51	55				
Frome Tn	42	16	7	19	61	72	55				
Arlsey Tn	42	15	9	18	64	73	54				
St Neots Tn	42	15	8	19	72	73	53				
Truro City	42	13	9	20	60	82	48				
Banbury Utd	42	14	5	23	63	106	47				
Chippenham	42	13	6	23	55	83	45				
Burnham	42	12	8	22	58	85	44				
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Bashley	42	4	4	34	33	122	16				
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**BANBURY** conceded a goal in the first minute as they lost at home to play-off chasing St Albans in the Calor League's Premier Division on Saturday.

Home keeper Scott Dutton saved John Frendo's effort, but the ball rebounded to Steve Wales who scored.

The hosts equalised in the 26th minute when a corner from the right, taken by Marvin Martin, was headed home by Luke Fathers from 12 yards.

However, two goals in the space of four minutes from Frendo put St Albans firmly back in command by the interval

Five minutes into the second half, Lee Chappell dinked the ball over Dutton from five yards to make it 4-1. Saints' Paul Bastock forced home

Banbury Utd (Fathers 26)	1
St Albans City (Wales 1, Frendo 37, 41, Chappell 50, Conley 65)	5

defender Luke Cray to make a great clearance. But within 30 seconds it was 5-1 as James Comley lobbed Dutton from the edge of the penalty area to complete the scoring.

**Banbury Utd:** Dutton, Cray, Fathers, Mullarkey (Green 60), Abrahams, Fishwick, Obeng, Martin, Skendi (Tappin 67), Dias (Talabi 51), Evan-gelinos. Subs not used: Collins, Strafford.

Attendance: 308.



Under pressure: Banbury United's goalkeeper Scott Dutton

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### ARIES

Mar 21-Apr 19

Love has seen you make compromises you wouldn't usually even consider. What you need to ask yourself now is whether you're happy with the changes you've made to who you are? Answering this honestly dictates what you say to the others which the stars show are coming this weekend. Give me a ring now to hear why it's worth spending extra time on work projects you're involved in.

0906 585 4360

### LIBRA

Sep 23-Oct 22

You're confused, but just because something is right for someone else, doesn't mean it will be right for you. Follow your instincts. You know what will make you happy and it has to be better for you. Eating out this week can see you crossing paths with your soul mate. Keep your eyes peeled and your options open. Ring now to hear which sign is your perfect love match.

0906 585 4366

### TAURUS

Apr 20-May 20

Emotions blur your usually good judgement which could see friends turning their backs on you. This is actually a good thing Taurus, as it will show you quite clearly who you can and cannot trust, so out of confusion can come clarity. Someone you didn't want to have to deal with in business demands to be faced. Ring now for some tactics to maintain control.

0906 585 4361

### SCORPIO

Oct 23-Nov 21

A great future is like a house, it's built brick by brick, not just in a day. Why you're rushing things this week is a mystery although Mars does indicate that you feel you're on a time limit to say what you want and how you feel. A lack of energy on Friday can cause stress, so use your time before Thursday to get what needs to be done sorted. Phone me so I can help you achieve greatness.

0906 585 4367

### GEMINI

May 21-Jun 20

Arguments in the workplace don't have to involve you, if you to walk away from any confrontations which aren't your business. If you don't, you could end up looking like a troublemaker. Monetary deals should be tied up as soon as possible and before Thursday please. Don't be late on Friday. Your reputation and finances depend on it. Ring now, we have so much to talk about.

0906 585 4362

### SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22-Dec 21

Love should be unconditional, you know that right Sagittarius? Anyone who tries to convince you otherwise is not worthy of your time and attention. A great week to enter into any sort of a competition or to win over someone in a dispute. Stick to plans this weekend or you'll miss out on an announcement you never could have expected to hear. Ring me to make your life a great one.

0906 585 4368

### CANCER

Jun 21-Jul 22

Family only want what's best for you which is why they're so listening on telling you how they feel. You don't have to take their advice, but intend to it this week can show you that there are alternatives other than the ones you see as your only option. You're confusing romantic overtures for path of friendship. Look again! Ring now for more on this really exciting month ahead.

0906 585 4363

### CAPRICORN

Dec 22-Jan 19

Venus, the planet of love, makes it hard for you not to wear your heart on your sleeve. Getting others to give you feedback and admit how they feel could be a little more problematic though my friend. Bide your time. That way when others do speak, you'll know that it's from the heart. Give me a call to hear why I'm so happy that you're being honest with your emotions now.

0906 585 4369

### LEO

Jul 23-Aug 22

New attractions beckon and leave you with little time to be able to think things through properly. There is a troublemaker in your career and your less time and attention you give them the better. Don't bite, but show you can be the bigger person. Cancelled deals are a blessing. Attractions in the workplace have much potential. Ring now to hear how travel can bring promotion for you.

0906 585 4364

### AQUARIUS

Jan 20-Feb 18

Your opinion does count Aquarius, it's just that what is going on in the lives of close ones appears to be more important that you realise. Information which comes your way by Thursday should confirm this. Showing you can work hard will benefit your reputation and, in time, your finances. It may even be worth giving up social time for work this week. Phone me so I can explain in full.

0906 585 4370

### VIRGO

Aug 23-Sep 22

You know you're asserting yourself but others could take your new attitude as aggressive. Know when to back down and when to compromise. This is a week which can see you finally dealing with a financial situation you couldn't get a hold of at the beginning of the month. Friends can become lovers from Wednesday. Ring me so I can tell you all about your future.

0906 585 4365

### PISCES

Feb 19-Mar 20

You're now starting to believe in yourself and your dreams. Due to this fact, great things can and will happen. Your psychic nature kicks in from Monday and makes it easy for you to see who is friend and who is foe. You may have no alternative but to pay for someone who can't pay for themselves. You need to know, you're helping them gain independence by doing so. Ring now to reveal all.

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# Crossover ticks all right boxes

By David Duffy

**S**uzuki's new crossover vehicle makes an instant impression — and luckily for Suzuki it is a good one.

The sheer solidity and build quality of the SX4 S-Cross shine through the second that you fire up the engine.

Well-made, rattle-free and economical, the newcomer boosts the Japanese carmaker's pedigree in the production of crossover and four-wheel-drive cars.

The attraction of crossover vehicles is easy to understand. A high driving position, strong, striking styling, combined with family-friendly amounts of cabin and luggage space make for an attractive alternative to a standard hatchback.

Priced from about £15,000, the S-Cross comes in a choice of two- or four-wheel-drive and four specifications, all of them fitted with seven airbags and electronic stability control as standard.

The engine choice is a straight decision between diesel and petrol, both 1.6 litres and both producing 120 horsepower.

The diesel, while rumble at low speed, will be cheaper to run for people covering lots of miles, and on the road the Hungarian-built S-Cross is stable, quiet and as solid as steel as the initial impression of the

build quality suggests. Suzuki says it carried out tests on European roads before launching the car and that shows in an excellent blend of handling, stability and driving comfort.

The four-wheel-drive system has four modes — auto, sport, snow, and lock — that can be selected at the flick of a dial.

The auto mode, likely to be the most-used setting, uses two-wheel-drive by default and will switch to four-wheel-drive if wheelspin is detected. Sport mode is best suited to twisting country roads, boosting engine speed by 500rpm and automatically diverting 20 per cent more torque to the rear wheels.

All models are equipped as standard with tyre pressure monitoring, as well as daytime running lights, cruise control with speed limiter, air conditioning, heated door mirrors, protective skid plates and wheelarch extensions.

## Auto facts

**Model:** Suzuki SX4 S-Cross 1.6 DDIS

Allgrip SZ5

**Price:** £23,549

**Insurance group:** 19A (1-50)

**Fuel consumption (Combined):**

64.2mpg

**Top speed:** 108mph

**Length:** 430cm/169.3in

**Width:** 176.5cm/69.5in

**Luggage capacity:** 15.2 cu ft

**Fuel tank capacity:** 11 gallons/50 litres

**CO2 emissions:** 114g/km

**Warranty:** 3 years/60,000 miles



**IMPRESSIVE:** The SX4 S-Cross is stable, quiet and solid and comes over as a seriously impressive vehicle

Move up to the top-of-the-range test model and Suzuki has thrown all its toys into the mix with satellite navigation and DAB radio, rear parking camera, front and rear parking proximity sensors, leather upholstery, double sliding panoramic sunroof and automatic headlamps.

Instrumentation and switchgear is clear and fuss-free, though the steering wheel sprouts no fewer than 14 separate controls for everything from cruise control and speed limiter to the hi-fi system.

The lasting impression of the S-Cross is of a seriously impressive car.

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## Wheelsanddeals

■ **SPANISH** car maker Seat has injected some added sparkle into its Ibiza compact hatch, with the announcement of a new FR Edition variant. Borrowing a 1.4-litre petrol engine from Volkswagen, it boasts clever cylinder cut-off technology to save fuel and cut emissions. During periods of low demand, the engine switches from four to two cylinders — technology that's now appearing on VW, Audi and even Bentley models. On sale now in both three- and five-door guise, prices start at £15,320, with a £600 premium for the higher specification models.

■ **VOLKSWAGEN** has announced pricing and specification details ahead of the launch of its updated Polo. The first deliveries of the cosmetically and mechanically enhanced supermini are expected in July, with the entry-level model priced from £11,100. The flagship BlueGT model will run to £19,715.

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## BritishGrandPrixnews

## Silverstone plans three historic F1 parades

THIS year's British Grand Prix (July 4-6) will be the 50th Grand Prix to be held at Silverstone Circuit. To mark the occasion, fans attending this year's event will be treated to three special commemorative parades, featuring British Grand Prix winning cars and drivers that have provided unforgettable moments in the circuit's illustrious history.

The three parades — one scheduled for each day of the three-day event — will transfer spectators and drivers back to a bygone era, as a host of British Formula 1 drivers are to

be reunited with the cars they drove to British Grand Prix victory.

Silverstone has begun its search for these iconic, original cars and says that the first driver and car to be involved in the parade is two-times British Grand Prix winner (1969 and 1971) and three-times Formula 1 World Champion Sir Jackie Stewart, who is expected to be reunited with his 1969 British Grand Prix-winning Matra MS80.

The car, driven by Sir Jackie and originally run by Ken Tyrrell's Matra International team, was

one of the first F1 cars to be designed with wings for downforce. 1969 was also the year that Sir Jackie went on to win his first Formula 1 World Championship.

Looking ahead to this year's 50th Grand Prix at Silverstone and the commemorative parade laps, Sir Jackie said: "Britain should be very proud that the very beginning of Formula One was at Silverstone, and that we will be celebrating its 50th Grand Prix in July.

"Silverstone, at that time, was one of the fastest racetracks in the world."

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In motors, local media (41 per cent) was cited as the most useful source for seeing which types of cars were available in respondents' price ranges, ahead of specialist car websites (39 per cent), other web sites such as Gumtree or eBay (27 per cent), and specialist car magazines (18 per cent).

- Local media refers to local newspapers and their websites.
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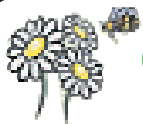
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